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Books of the Middle Ages

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Books of the Middle Ages

Jacobus de Voragine, writer of The Golden Legend, at his desk

Illuminated books belong exclusively to the Middle Ages. Their production begins about the time of the fall of Imperial Rome, and lasts until the coming of the printing press in the Fifteenth Century. They are at the same time both art galleries and depositories of learning, and in this double sense they permit us, either through examination of their decoration or in reading the text, to open the door to the fuller understanding of those erroneously named "Dark Ages". Particularly is this true for the Canadian public, far removed geographically from that other storehouse of mediaeval inheritance, the great cathedrals of Europe. The following is an attempt to give some details of the work which went into the making of a mediaeval book, together with the historical development of the books themselves. It is written in the hope of increasing the visitor's enjoyment of their attractive pages.

From the Fourth to the Twelfth Centuries all mediaeval books were made by monks in isolated monasteries dotted throughout Western Europe. Saint Jerome, in discussing the activities suitable to monastic life, had recommended the copying of manuscripts as one of the most fitting. Monte Cassino founded by St. Benedict, was a principal centre for the work and in its destruction by bombing during 1944, numbers of old books still preserved there from the days of its activity as a great centre of writing, were destroyed. The Benedictines of not only Italy, but of England, France, and other European states, were particularly adept in book making, although other monastic orders engaged in it to a lesser extent. It was only when the formation of universities like Paris, Oxford and Bologna created a tremendous demand for books that laymen became scribes. In the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries the private patrons of the arts, by engaging the leading artists of their day to decorate their books, furthered the secularization of book making.

The part of the monastery used by the monks for the writing of books was known as the scriptorium. The earliest scriptorium was merely a small room opening into the choir of the church, but in later Benedictine buildings, the aisle of the cloisters next to the church (for that was on the south side where the sun would stream in and warm the cold stone), was set aside for the purpose. Along one side of this cloister passage were arranged the "carrels" or small cubicles for the readers or writers. In each stood a desk and stand to hold the book copied. Across the passage were the cupboards for storage of books. Such an arrangement in fact still retained in libraries of certain of the Oxford Colleges.

We have preserved in "The Rites and Monuments of Durham" a mediaeval account of the scriptorium of Durham Cathedral, which is both graphic and explicit:

> "In the northe syde of the Cloister, from the corner over againste the Church dour to the corner over againste the Dorter (dormitory)

cuts
464 a–d

Christ Rising From the Tomb
Initial Letter 'R' from an early 14th Century French Antiphonarium

dour, was all fynely glased, from the hight to the sole (sill) within a little of the ground into the Cloister garth. And in every windowe iij PEWES or CARRELLS, where every one of the old Monks had his carrell, severall by himselfe, that, when they had dyned, they did resorte to that place of Cloister and there studyed upon there books, every one in his carrell, all the afternonne, unto evensong tyme. This was there exercise every daie. All there pewes or carrells was all fynely wainscotted (with oak) and verie close, all but the forepart which had carved wourke that gave light in at ther carrell doures of wainscott. And in every carrell was a deske to lye there bookes on. And the carrells was no greater then from one stanchell (mullion) of the windowe to another.

And over againste the carrells against the church wall did stande certaine great almeries (armaria or cupboards) of wainscott all full of BOOKES, with great store of ancient manuscripts to help them in their study, wherein did lye as well the old auncyent written Doctors of the Church as other prophane authors, with dyverse other holie men's wourkes, so that every one dyd studye what Doctor pleased them best, havinge the Librarie at all tymes to goe studie in besydes there carrells."

In the scriptorium the writers normally sat on stools. It was a back-breaking and arduous task, particularly when we remember that a single book might take many months to produce. Marten of Leon, it is recorded, as an old man was allowed the special privilege of supporting his body and arms by cords fixed to the ceiling when working on a very exacting manuscript. It is no wonder the scribe Florencio in 945, when he thinks of the work which has gone into the making of a book, cautions the reader to take care in handling it. He says:

"He who knows not how to write thinks that writing is no labour, but be certain, and I assure you that it is true, it is a painful task. It extinguishes the light from the eyes, it bends the back, it crushes the viscera and the ribs, it brings forth pain to the kidneys, and weariness to the whole body. Therefore, O reader, turn ye the leaves with care, keep your fingers far from the text, for as a hailstorm devastates the fields, so does the careless reader destroy the script and the book. Know ye how sweet to the sailor is arrival at port? Even so for the copyist is tracing the last line."

Parchment made from sheep skin, or finer quality vellum, of calf, was used in place of paper because of the tremendous amount of wear which it is capable of withstanding. In the monastery, one of the offices was that "pergamentarius", filled by a monk charged with the responsibility of preparing the sheets of parchment for the manuscript writer. He selected the hides, scraped their surface with a razor, and then polished them with pumice stone or animal's teeth so that no hair or wrinkles were left. The thinnest possible sheets which he could make were from intestines, and known as "uterine" vellum. The sheets were either sewn together to make a vellum roll or bound into a "codex", the form followed in modern book making. "Codex" is a term which refers to the sawn wooden boards used for the covers. "Folio", "quarto", or "octavo" refer to the size of the pages, according to whether the sheet of parchment was folded once, twice or three times before binding into the book.

When the making of books began to pass out of the hands of the monastic orders, a government committee of forty was formed in France to check on the quality of the parchment offered for sale. This committee superintended a fair held at Lendit on June 12th each year, the day after the Feast of St. Barnabas. At it the year's production of French parchment was offered for sale. Buyers and sellers entered in a long procession. Then a rector opened operations with solemn benediction before bargaining began. In buying, the king's representatives had first choice, the members of the university second, and only when their needs had been filled, was the remainder put on sale to the general public. Finally the demand for parchment became so great that it was impossible to fill it with freshly prepared skins and many old books were scraped of their writing and re-used. Numerous ancient texts were thus lost.

Before beginning to write, the scribe personally prepared his own pen with that indispensible article, a pen knife. He selected a reed for the writing of the large capital letters and texts of the service books intended to be placed on the lectern and which the whole choir followed during the celebration of the mass. Usually, however, quills of geese or turkeys were used in ordinary writing, although those of eagles or swans were considered more desirable because of their firmness. They were, of course, difficult to secure. Particularly minute writing was done with a crow quill. The scribe used the same fine pen for tracing out the light scroll work along the margins of the pages, or for accenting with thin black or white lines the illuminated letters which enlivened the text. These mediaeval scribes wrote with their pens held vertically; the results are very broad upright strokes and thin horizontal lines so characteristic of early writing.

Each writer had his own favourite recipe for the inks he used. Theophilus, an Eleventh Century monk, liked a mixture of water, wine and black from charred thorn wood. Others preferred oak charcoal. Sometimes lamp black was collected by holding a plate over a flame, and the soot which gathered was mixed with a gum. The outstanding feature of all these inks is their remarkable lasting qualities. Fading is scarcely known except in the writing of the Fifteenth Century by which time iron sulphate had been introduced.

A word seems in order about the wonderful regularity and beauty of layout in a page of writing. The entire sheet was carefully planned. The width of the lines was measured with compass dividers, and where the edges have not been trimmed, the punctate marks are still plainly visible. In the Tenth to Twelfth Centuries the guide lines were carefully ruled with a sharp point, leaving a crease on the page. Later the scribe inked them in, normally using black but sometimes red for the sake of decorative effect.

et us turn from the writing to the next step in the making of a mediaeval book, its decoration with the jewel-like miniature which breathed life into the pages. Originally the word "miniature" did not mean "minute" as we know it to-day. Rather it is derived from "minium", a red colouring mixed with the gesso underpainting so that the design was more readily visible against the light coloured parchment, making for greater ease in carrying out the subsequent colour work. The painter, who executed these miniatures, was known as the miniator.

Paints of the finest quality were always selected for these exquisite paintings to prevent fading. How important this was is readily apparent when we consider the amount of time and money which went into their execution. For example, in 1409 the famous Duc de Berry, that extravagent patron of the arts, hired the Flemish Pol Limbourg and his two brothers to illuminate for him what was intended to be the most beautiful book of all time. They had only completed ten and a half pages of illustration in the calendar part of the Book of Hours in seven years when the old Duke died and his heirs, horrified at the waste, had the work discontinued. It was subsequently completed in 1485 by Jean Colombe, another Flemish artist.

We know a good deal about the preparation of colours from early treatises on the subject, particularly the carefully detailed description given by Cennino Cennini in 1437. He was an Italian artist who had learned his profession in the studio of Taddeo Gaddi, and had been apparently much impressed by the technical side of his craft. In his book, Cennini first tells us how parchment should be prepared and pens cut. Then he goes on to describe the slabs on which the paints are to be ground; porphyry makes the black, but serpentine or marble may be used. As to colours, "dragon's red" is the name given to a brilliant paint from the resin of a tree, but so-called because of the ancient belief that the colour was only obtained through the mixing of the blood of a dragon and elephant in deadly combat. Ochres and green earths were natural clays, and Cennini even tells us the spot where he personally found such clays of the best quality. The most desirable white of the illuminator is lime-white, made by burning the finest white marble, grinding the ash finely with water, and then drying the residue into cakes. For blacks, the tendrils or young shoots of vines should be burned, thrown into water to quench the fire, and then ground on the slab. The skins of almonds or kernels of peaches so treated also made very good black.

Another favourite colour of the miniaturists was "Kermes red". This is a carmine pigment made by crushing the little "Kermes" beetles which live on the oak trees in the countries bordering the eastern Mediterranean. Purple is often a mixture of "Kermes" red and ultramarine. Less vivid red could be produced by grinding porphyry.

Ultramarine blue was the most expensive colour used by the illuminator. Precious lapis lazuli was ground, and to it was added glue, pine resin and new wax. The prepared pigment was at times worth as much as three times its weight in gold. Accounts exist telling how carefully overseers watched the artists to make sure that they stole none of the precious material as they worked in the scriptorium. One artist, annoyed at being under suspicion, dipped his brush in the ultramarine many times during the day. At the end of the day he poured out the water used for washing his brushes, recovering the heavy ultramarine which had sunk to the bottom. He handed it to the overseer, remarking how readily he could have stolen it if he had been really dishonest. Artists were not normally expected to supply the ultramarine which they used as was the case with the rest of their colours. It was provided by the patron in addition to the fee which he paid for the execution of the work.

Brilliant touches of gold enliven the pages of mediaeval books. Gold leaf was made by beating out sovereigns into about twenty times the thickness of modern leaf. After application to the page, Cennini advises that it could best be polished or burnished by rubbing with "sapphires, emera-

lds, rubies and granite, if you can afford the expense, or teeth of dogs, wolves, lions, cats, leopards and all carnivorous animals generally" if you cannot buy the former. During the earlier periods of illumination, and again in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, gold was often applied in a liquid state.

Eggs were used as the best medium for the mixing of colours. Again Cennini tells artists to use town-laid eggs because of the light-coloured yolks, for the painting of faces of young people. This gives light flesh tints. For older people the yolks of country-laid eggs are preferable since the grass yolks will give darker tones to the flesh.

The early miniaturists were monks, and the lay artists who undertook private commissions in the later periods were members of the Guild of St. Luke. St. Luke was their patron saint since traditionally he had been an artist. As members of the Guild, these workers were forced to conform to certain standards of production, but in spite of this, their work lost the freshness and originality of previous centuries. Richard of Bury, Bishop of Durham and Grand Chancellor of England, chided the poorer workers saying: "Let the good monks write books, and the bad occupy themselves with other things." By the Sixteenth Century, most books were printed, and no manuscripts of the artistic importance were being produced by either Guild members or monastic houses.

Due to the limitations of space, it is, naturally, quite impossible to give anything like a complete description of the development of manuscript illumination in Western Europe in a booklet of this nature. The following highlights may, however, serve as guide posts to point out the general trends.

A copy of Vergil, written during the Fourth or early Fifth Century, is the earliest known mediaeval book. It is now in the Vatican and is illustrated with half page drawings in the classical style set in outline three-colour borders. Many of the early books copied by the monks were Classics, but, of course, the Church was primarily interested in the preservation and propagation of the Gospels. Cassiodorus, that versatile Italian monk, historian and statesman explained in the Sixth Century that in copying religious books the writer was preaching:

> "unto men by means of the hand...and fighting the Devil's insidious wiles with pen and ink. For every word of the Lord which is copied deals Satan a wound. Thus, though seated in one spot, the scribe traverses lands through the dissemination of what he has written."

The earliest Christian book is a fragment of the Book of Genesis now in Vienna. It seems to have been made for the Eastern Church in the Fifth Century. Twenty-four of its pages are of purple dyed vellum with miniatures. Another early book is a Sixth Century Botany of Dioscorides. The characteristic feature which particularly distinguishes books of the Fourth to Eighth Centuries in Western continental Europe is the type of drawings with which they are decorated. These are often based on Roman prototypes and explain the text just as would illustrations in a modern book, rather than enliven the pages in a de-

corative sense as did the Celtic book makers' work.

The style of the Celtic books was developed by monks who, living in peaceful isolation, had established the Irish Church in the Fifth Century. Here they wrote books and decorated them with intricate interlacing bands, tightly knotted, and only occasionally using the human figure. It is a style very similar to the amazingly beautiful metal work design on articles like the Tara brooch fashioned by other monks in the same monasteries. Brilliant colours were used to enhance the barbaric splendour of the books, but without the use of gold. The Venerable Bede tells us that the monks extracted their purple manuscript dye from the murex shell fish found on the shores of the Irish Sea. It is used in that most famous of all Irish books, the Book of Kells. This late Seventh Century Bible was completed for use in the Cathedral Church at Kells founded by St. Columba. A great contemporary book was the Lindisfarne Gospels, now in the British Museum but formerly used in the monastery on the Island of Lindisfarne, off the north English coast, and in the Twelfth Century taken to Durham. Both books serve as examples of the elaborate ceremonial Bibles designed for use only on special occasions in the great religious houses of Europe. Similar large Bibles continued to be made right down to the Twelfth Century in many monasteries, and stand in marked contrast to the smaller ones designed for more humble use.

While Celtic illumination was still flourishing in Ireland, many changes were taking place in the book making of continental Europe. Charlemagne became King of the Franks in 771 and soon established an art school at his palace for the encouragement of artists and writers. A decree set out that scribes should use only proper Roman letters. Alcium of York was summoned to Tours to reform the French Church, and an interest in the Classics was revived. Out of such varied roots grew the Carolingian School of manuscript writing and illumination, which developed the minuscule letter form. This was a small, but clear and easily read letter, derived with many modifications from the old Roman capitals, and is tremendously important since it was really the direct parent of our modern characters. Illumination of the period is at its best in a Gospel Book, now kept at the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, which was made for Charlemagne and his wife Hildegarde by a monk Godescalc in 781. It contains many illustrations, notably full page pictures of each of the four Evangelists, a Christ in Glory, and the Fountain of Life, one of the most ancient symbols of faith. Strife following the death of Charlemagne did not completely halt book making; there are several books owned by Charlemagne's grandsons in the same Parisian library. When fine Carolingian books were no longer being turned out in France, the Ottonian kings carried on the tradition at Reichenau on Lake Constance during the Tenth Century.

Alfred the Great's interest in the arts is responsible for the beginnings of English illumination. A great work of his Anglo-Saxon school is the very beautiful Benedictional of Aethelwold made in Winchester by Godemann around 970. It has thirty full-page illustrations of the life of Christ. For the two succeeding centuries Romanesque styles held sway throughout Western Europe. Many Romanesque drawings are in red, blue and brown pen outline. The figures wear fluttering draperies. The work has a freedom and gaiety previously unknown in illumination--leaf borders begin to grow, figures twist and turn, the solemnity of the early drawing is left behind. During the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries there was a constant interchange of monks between monasteries so that a uniform style developed on both sides of the English

Channel, and the works of Northern France and Flanders become closely related to those of Winchester and Canterbury. The Anglo-Saxon School Completely lost its individuality after the Norman Conquest, and an Anglo-Norman style replaced it with its harder, more precise character. Its clean, logical approach to the problem is a part of a century when St. Bernard was attempting to rationalize Christian faith and feeling in a most dogmatic fashion.

The Gothic movement replaced the Romanesque during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries in Western Europe. Great cathedrals are the most impressive evidence of the religious fervour of the age, and in the manuscript illumination the frames for the swaying Gothic figures are copied from architectural forms, while the curling dragons and fantastic grotesques, so often ornamenting the pages, are first cousins of gargoyles. Paralleling the religious zeal of the age a new spirit of humanity appeared in the Twelfth Century. It is illustrated by the change from the portrayal of the Madonna and Child as the Romanesque Queen of Heaven presenting a King to the world, to that of a compassionate Mother with her Babe. Men of the Gothic period made personal devotions to this same Virgin, and innumerable Books of Hours, the prayer books of the laymen, were written to assist them in their worship. These "Horae" provided an opportunity for artists, in carrying out private commissions, to execute, particularly in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, the most beautiful and luxurious illuminated volumes. As patrons, the French Court, the Duke of Berry and the Burgundian Court all encouraged book making and employed the leading artists of their day. One of the great Books of Hours in Paris, illustrated by Jean Colombe, has 157 full page pictures and 1155 medallion figure subjects set in ivy borders. It is probably due to the encouragement of continental patrons that French illumination, which had paralleled English work in the Thirteenth Century, forged ahead during the Fourteenth until an excellence was achieved in the harmonious balance between the written page, the foliage borders and the illuminated illustrations. Paris work reached a peak of perfection in so far as excellence of miniature painting was concerned in the 1460's under the influence of the artist Jean Fouquet. At the same time as the great French works of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries numerous Flemish books were being written and illuminated by such famous artists as the Van Eycks and the Limbourg Brothers.

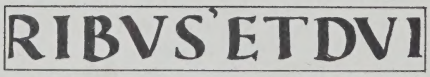
Books of Hours are but one of the many types of Gothic books. Other religious works were Psalters and profusely illustrated "moralized" Bibles showing the whole of the scriptures in a series of painted panels. St. Louis and his grandson, Philip the Fair, each had made for himself famous moralized Bibles. In Thirteenth Century England in particular, Bestiaries were common; characteristics of animals, usually quite fanciful, were used to illustrate Christian truth. For example, the belief that lion cubs were born dead and after three days are brought to life when breathed on by the male, is given as a symbol of the Resurrection. Later Jacobus de Voragine's "Golden Legend", describing the lives of the saints, and purely lay books like "Launcelot of the Lake" or "Books of Marvels", describing eastern travel, were popular. A great work of the Gothic period was the "History of Alexander", but to the mediaeval mind historical accuracy of setting was not an essential. That Alexander of Macedon's troops used cannon and wore Fifteenth Century dress was no cause for worry.

While in north-western Europe Gothic illumination had a linear surface quality and a lightness that often gave an illusion of floating to the figures, Italian miniature painting tended to pay more attention to the solidity of three-dimensional form. Right from the time of Giotto a relationship to panel and fresco painting is apparent. Fra Angelico, working in the Dominican Convent at Fiesole in 1407 was equally well known in all three fields of endeavour. In the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries the finest Italian illumination was being turned out in Florence and Siena but in the Fifteenth, northern centres like Milan became much more important. As in France, great patrons like the Medici family and the Papal Court encouraged book making. With the ending of the Mediaeval period, books in Italy took on Renaissance forms much earlier than did those of France and England. Probably illumination would have been soon replaced by the Renaissance tradition in Northern Europe as in Italy, if the advent of the printing press had not spelled the doom of the hand written book. However, manuscript books went out of fashion so quickly and completely at the beginning of The Sixteenth Century that they remain entirely a product of the Middle Ages.

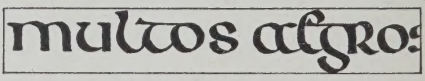
The decorative initial letters on Pages 2, 4, 6, and 11 are designed from ones in the Vulgate Bible owned by the Royal Ontario Museum, Number 917.1.2

Mediaeval Book Scripts

Roman



Half Uncial



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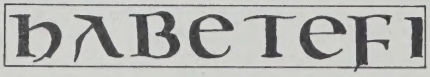
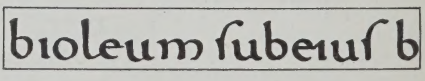
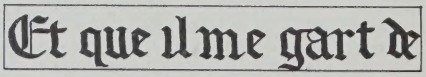


Minuscule



Gothic



SOME EXAMPLES OF MEDIAEVAL MANUSCRIPTS IN THE MUSEUM COLLECTION

949.182.1 Portion of a leaf from a grammatical treatise in Latin, Carolingian minuscule; French; 9th Century.

949.182.3 Leaf of a Latin Commentary on Gospels; French; 10th Century.

949.241.6 Leaf of a Latin Commentary on Gospels; French; 10th Century.

949.182.4 Leaf of a Latin Treatise on Psalms;German or Italian;10th Century

949.182.2 Leaf of a Latin Commentary on Gospels; French; 11th Century.

949.182.12 Leaf in Latin; decorated initials; French; early 13th Century.

917.1.2 Vulgate Bible with St. Jerome's Commentaries; 587 leaves with 70 illuminated initials;Anglo-Norman work;c.1260; Gift of Sir Edmund Walker. Many of these Vulgate Bibles were turned out in the Benedictine Abbeys of Northern France and England, during the 13th Century. Some are written in a very fine hand, with as many as 16 lines to the inch. This has 12. All copies follow a very similar pattern, the first decorated initial showing St. Jerome at work writing. This book was presented to Thomas Bradwardine,Archbishop of Canterbury, by a French monk in the 14th Century.

917.1.1 Sentences of Peter the Lombard; 225 pages in Latin with subscript or portions of the Gospels in Greek; English; mid 13th Century; Gift of Sir Edmund Walker.

939.8.1 Magna Charta together with 1st and 2nd Statutes of Westminster and other early statutes; 161 pages in Latin and Norman French; English; late 13th Century; gift of Dr. H. J. Cody.

949.182.6 Page in Latin with table of Relationships, "De Affinitate"; English or French; 13th Century.

938.5 Leaf from Antiphonarium; illuminated initial letter "R"; Franco-Flemish work; first half of 14th Century; illustrated on page 2.

917.2.2 Book of Hours; 123 leaves in Latin; 9 pages have crude marginal drawings in colour; French; late 14th Century.

930.1.1 Leaf from Antiphonarium; illuminated initial letter showing Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great,excavating the True Cross; Italian; Milan; first half of 15th Century.

921.5.2 Rime di Roberto Contarini; written by E. Veneziano; collection of Italian sonnets; 118 pages; 1431; gift of Sir Herbert Thompson.

938.3 Book of Hours; 117 leaves in Latin; 14 fully illuminated pages chiefly showing the Passion of Our Lord; School of Paris,1425-50. This is an example of the more elaborate type of Book of Hours produced for the well to do layman in the studios of Paris during the 15th Century.

909.2 Antiphonarium; 148 leaves in Latin; Florentine; mid 15th Century.

949.182.5 Leaf in Latin; a humanist hand carefully imitating the fine writine of the 12th Century; Italian; 15th Century.

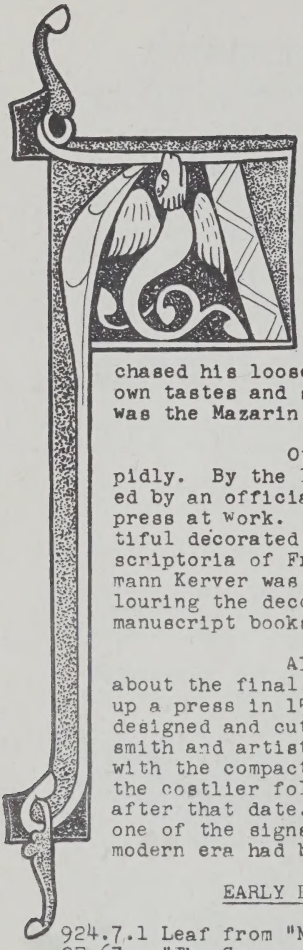
930.6 Leaf of Antiphonarium; decorated initial letter; 15th Century.

923.5.17 Illuminated initial "D";Martyrdom of St. Peter;Italian;15th Cent.

921.5.1 Rime Istoriche de Fatti di Giulio P.P. II; written by Bernardo de Avanzino and dedicated to Francesco Gonzaga Marchese de Mantua; 35 pages; Italian; dated 1507; Gift of Sir Herbert Thompson.

In addition, the Museum has a number of pages and illuminated initials from the 12th to the 16th Centuries, in general of less interest than those above.

EARLY PRINTING.



After printing was invented, the press only gradually replaced the hand-written books. Gutenberg, a German of Mainz, has received credit for making the first moveable type about the middle of the Fifteenth Century. His primary intention does not appear to have been to produce inexpensive books, but rather to make more beautiful and magnificent volumes than could scribes for the same price. They were thus not necessarily cheaper than the poorer quality written books then being sold. In early printed books, spaces for the large initial letters were left blank and subsequently filled in by hand. The buyer purchased his loose sheets which he then had illuminated and bound to his own tastes and specifications. Probably the first European printed book was the Mazarin Bible of Gutenberg, dated 1455.

Other printers soon set up shops and the industry grew rapidly. By the 1480's Caxton was printing books in London. He was honoured by an official visit from King Edward IV who was anxious to see a press at work. At the same time Paris was the centre for printing beautiful decorated Books of Hours, imitating those turned out by hand in the scriptoria of France and Flanders during the preceding centuries. Thielmann Kerver was a leading printer of these, usually using vellum and colouring the decorative borders by hand. They quickly replaced the poor manuscript books then being placed on the market.

Aldus Manutius, a Venetian printer and scholar, brought about the final step in the production of a modern printed book. He set up a press in 1501 using a new compact type called Italic which had been designed and cut by Francesco Francia, a famous Bolognese diecutter, goldsmith and artist. The hand written manuscripts could no longer compete with the compact, cheap books of Aldus as they had been able to do with the costlier folios such as Gutenberg printed. Few written books exist after that date. The supremacy of cheap printing in book production is one of the signs that the Middle Ages were coming to an end and a more modern era had begun.

EARLY EXAMPLES OF PRINTING IN THE MUSEUM COLLECTION

924.7.1 Leaf from "Mazarin Bible"; Johann Gutenberg before 1456.
OE 67 "The Sermons of St.Chrysostom";Sensenschmidt & Keffer;Nuremberg;1471.
924.7.3 Leaf from "Appius";Erhardt Ratdolt & Petrus Loslein;Venice, 1477.
924.7.4 Leaf from "The Golden Legend" in English; William Caxton; 1483; at Westminster
924.7.2 Leaf from "The Nuremberg Chronicle"; Koberger; 1483.
924.7.5 Leaf from "Chaucer's Canterbury Tales" in English by Pynson; 1491.
OG 179 "Book of Hours"; Thielmann Kerver;Paris;1500; hand coloured borders.
OH 321 "Commento di Hieronymo Benevieni"; Tubini; Florence; 1500.
OH 333 "Cornucopia"; Aldus Manutius; Venice; 1513.
OI 343 Mathewe's Bible; Dayne and Seres; London; 1549.
OK 14 Genevan or Breeches Bible; London; 1560.

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